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CIA said to finance Chilean strikers

Washington (NYT)—The Central Intelligence Agency secretly financed striking labor unions and trade groups in Chile for more than 18 months before President Salvador Allende was overthrown, intelligence sources revealed yesterday.

The sources said the majority of more than \$7 million authorized for clandestine CIA activities in Chile was used in 1972 and 1973 to provide strike benefits and other means of support for anti-Allende strikers and workers.

No comment from Colby

William E. Colby, director of central intelligence, had no comment when told of the information.

In testimony yesterday before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the Secretary of State, Henry A. Kissinger, asserted that the intelligence agency's involvement in Chile had been authorized solely to keep alive political parties and news media threatened by Dr. Allende's one-party minority government. The clandestine activities, Dr. Kissinger said, were not aimed at subverting that government.

Among those heavily subsidized, the sources said, were the organizers of a nationwide truck strike that lasted 26 days in the fall of 1972, seriously disrupting Chile's economy and provoking the first of a series of labor crises for Dr. Allende.

Direct subsidies, the sources said, also were provided for a series of middle-class shopkeepers' strikes, that disrupted among others, that disrupted Santiago, the capital, in the summer of 1973, shortly before Dr. Allende was overthrown by a military coup.

At its peak, the 1973 strikes involved more than 230,000 truck drivers, shopkeepers and professionals who banded together in a middle-class movement that, many analysts have concluded, made a violent overthrow inevitable.

The sources, though readily acknowledging the intelligence agency's secret support for the middle classes, insisted that the Nixon administration's goal had not been to force an end to the presidency of Dr. Allende.

The sources noted that a request from the truckers union for more CIA financial aid in August, 1973, one month

before the coup, was rejected by the 40 Committee, the intelligence review board chaired by Dr. Kissinger.

None the less, the sources also conceded that some agency funds inevitably—as one high official put it—"could have filtered" to the truckers union thereafter.

"If we give it to A, and then A gives it to B and C and D," the official said, "in a sense it's true that D got it but the question is—did we give it to A knowing that D would get it?"

The official added that it was "awfully hard" to maintain control over local field operatives, particularly when large sums of cash were involved.

Several sources also explained that the Central Intelligence Agency, by using the Chilean black market, was able to increase the basic buying power of the \$7 million estimated to have been spent on clandestine efforts between 1970 and 1973. The unofficial exchange rate, sources said, was as much as 80 per cent higher than the official rate, indicating that the CIA's cash could have had a local impact of more than \$40 million.

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